

In the Claims

Please cancel claims 7-9 and amend claims 1, 13 and 15 as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, said coupler knuckle casting utilized in a railway freight car coupler, said coupler knuckle casting having said enhanced bearing surface area comprising:

(a) a tail section;

(b) a hub section, said hub section having a pivot pinhole formed therein, said pivot pinhole having generally straight cylindrical sidewalls;

(c) a front face section connected to said hub section, said front face section including a nose section and a pulling face portion formed inwardly from said nose section, at least a portion of said front face portion and said nose section includes an enhanced bearing surface area which includes a substantially flat portion disposed substantially in a vertical direction and which is substantially arcuate in a horizontal direction, said substantially flat portion extending for a predetermined distance in said vertical direction and for a predetermined length along said horizontal direction, said predetermined length extends over at least a portion of said hub

section and said front face section and at least a portion of
said nose section; and

(d) a transition section joining said tail section to said hub section, said transition section including a top metal section and a bottom metal section extending toward each other.

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b

2. (Previously Amended) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, according to claim 1, wherein said predetermined distance said substantially flat portion extends in said vertical direction is generally in a range of between about 3.5 inches and about 7.0 inches.

3. (Previously Amended) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, according to claim 2, wherein said predetermined distance said substantially flat portion extends in said vertical direction is generally in a range of between about 4.0 inches and about 5.5 inches.

4. (Previously Amended) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, according to claim 3, wherein said predetermined distance said substantially flat portion extends in said vertical direction is generally in a range of between about 4.0 inches and about 4.5 inches.

5. (Original) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, according to claim 1, wherein said coupler knuckle is cast steel.

6. (Original) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, according to claim 4, wherein said coupler knuckle is cast steel.

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7-9. (Cancelled)

10. (Original) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, according to claim 1, wherein said enhanced bearing surface area is hardened to a predetermined hardness.

11. (Original) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, according to claim *10.*, wherein said predetermined hardness is at least about 40 Rockwell C.

12. (Original) A coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, according to claim 1, wherein said nose section includes a generally cylindrical opening formed in an end portion thereof.

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1.13. (Currently Amended) In combination with a railway freight car coupler, the improvement comprising a coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced bearing surface area, said coupler knuckle casting having:

(a) a tail section;

(b) a hub section, said hub section having a pivot pinhole formed therein, said pivot pinhole having generally straight cylindrical sidewalls;

(c) a front face section connected to said hub section, said front face section including a nose section and a pulling face portion formed inwardly from said nose section, at least a portion of said front face portion and said nose section includes an enhanced bearing surface area which includes a substantially flat portion disposed substantially in a vertical direction and which is substantially arcuate in a horizontal direction, said substantially flat portion extending for a predetermined distance in said vertical direction and for a predetermined length along said horizontal direction, said predetermined length extends over at least a portion of said hub section and said front face section and at least a portion of said nose section; and

(d) a transition section joining said tail section to said hub section, said transition section including a top metal section and a bottom metal section extending toward each other.

14. (Original) The combination, according to claim 13,
wherein said nose section includes a generally cylindrical
opening formed in an end portion thereof.

15. (Currently Amended) In combination with an existing
railway freight car coupler, the improvement comprising
retrofitting a coupler knuckle casting having an enhanced
bearing surface area into said existing railway freight car
coupler, said coupler knuckle casting having:

(a) a tail section;

(b) a hub section, said hub section having a pivot pinhole
formed therein, said pivot pinhole having generally straight
cylindrical sidewalls;

(c) a front face section connected to said hub section,
said front face section including a nose section and a pulling
face portion formed inwardly from said nose section, at least a
portion of said front face portion and said nose section
includes an enhanced bearing surface area which includes a
substantially flat portion disposed substantially in a vertical
direction and which is substantially arcuate in a horizontal
direction, said substantially flat portion extending for a
predetermined distance in said vertical direction and for a
predetermined length along said horizontal direction, said
predetermined length extends over at least a portion of said hub

section and said front face section and at least a portion of
said nose section; and

(d) a transition section joining said tail section to said hub section, said transition section including a top metal section and a bottom metal section extending toward each other.

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16. (Original) The combination, according to claim 15,
wherein said nose section includes a generally cylindrical opening formed in an end portion thereof.